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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.  A method, comprising the steps of:

providing a set of predetermined function definitions which are different; and

preparing a project definition, said project definition including:

a plurality of function portions which each correspond to one of said function definitions in said set, and which each define at least one input port and at least one output port that are functionally related according to the corresponding function definition;

a further portion which includes a source portion identifying a data source and defining an output port through which data from the data source can be produced, and which includes a destination portion identifying a data destination and defining an input port through which data can be supplied to the data destination; and

binding information which includes binding portions that each associate a respective said input port with one of said output ports, at least one of said binding portions being a conditional binding which is responsive to a specified condition for associating a respective said input port with one of a plurality of different said output ports that form a set.

2.  A method according to Claim 1, including the step of formulating said condition to be a function of data which is available to said conditional binding from at least one of said output ports in said set.

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3.   A method according to Claim 1, wherein said step of preparing said project definition includes the step of having a user identify, for each said conditional binding, said input port therefor, said set of output ports therefor, said specified condition therefor, and a relationship between said specified condition and each said output port in said set.

4. A computer-readable medium encoded with a computer program which recognizes a set of predetermined function definitions that are different, and which is operable when executed to facilitate preparation of a project definition, said project definition including:

a plurality of function portions which each correspond to one of said function definitions in said set, and which each define at least one input port and at least one output port that are functionally related according to the corresponding function definition;

a further portion which includes a source portion identifying a data source and defining an output port through which data from the data source can be produced, and which includes a destination portion identifying a data destination and defining an input port through which data can be supplied to the data destination; and

binding information which includes binding portions that each associate a respective said input port with one of said output ports, at least one of said binding portions being a conditional binding which is responsive to a specified condition for associating a respective said input port with one of a plurality of different said output ports that form a set.

5. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 4, wherein said program is operable when executed to facilitate formulation of said specified condition to be a function of data which is available to said conditional binding from at least one of said output ports in said set.

6. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 4, wherein said program is operable when executed to facilitate said preparation of said project definition by having a user identify, for each said conditional binding, said input port therefor, said set of output ports therefor, said specified condition therefor, and a relationship between said specified condition and each said output port in said set.

7.   A method, comprising the steps of:

providing a set of predetermined function definitions which are different; and

preparing   a   project   definition,   said   project
5   definition including:

a plurality of function portions which each correspond to one of said function definitions in said set, and which each define at least one input port and at least one output port that are functionally related according to the
10   corresponding function definition, at least one of said function definitions being operative to automatically convert to a predetermined data type any data which is received at the input port thereof as a data type other than said predetermined data type;

15   a further portion which includes a source portion identifying a data source and defining an output port through which data from the data source can be produced, and which includes a destination portion identifying a data destination and defining an input port through which data
20   can be supplied to the data destination; and

binding information which includes binding portions that each associate a respective said input port with one of said output ports.

25   8.   A method according to Claim 7, including the step of selecting a numeric data type to be said predetermined data type.

9.   A method according to Claim 8, including the step
30   of accepting at least one of a text data type and an image data type as said other data type.

10. A method according to Claim 7, including the step of selecting a text data type to be said predetermined data type.

5      11. A method according to Claim 10, including the step of accepting at least one of a numeric data type and an image data type as said other data type.

12. A method according to Claim 7, including the step
10     of selecting an image data type to be said predetermined data type.

13. A method according to Claim 12, including the step of accepting at least one of a text data type and a
15     numeric data type as said other data type.

14. A computer-readable medium encoded with a computer program which recognizes a set of predetermined function definitions that are different, said program being operable when executed to facilitate preparation of a project definition which includes:

a plurality of function portions which each correspond to one of said function definitions in said set, and which each define at least one input port and at least one output port that are functionally related according to the corresponding function definition, at least one of said function definitions being operative to automatically convert to a predetermined data type any data which is received at the input port thereof as a data type other than said predetermined data type;

a further portion which includes a source portion identifying a data source and defining an output port through which data from the data source can be produced, and which includes a destination portion identifying a data destination and defining an input port through which data can be supplied to the data destination; and

binding information which includes binding portions that each associate a respective said input port with one of said output ports.

15. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 14, wherein said program is operable when executed to recognize a numeric data type as said predetermined data type.

16. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 15, wherein said program is operable when executed to accept at least one of a text data type and an image data type as said other data type.

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17. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 14, wherein said program is operable when executed to recognize a text data type as said predetermined data type.

5      18. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 17, wherein said program is operable when executed to accept at least one of a numeric data type and an image data type as said other data type.

10      19. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 14, wherein said program is operable when executed to recognize an image data type as said predetermined data type.

20. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 19,
15   wherein said program is operable when executed to accept at least one of a text data type and a numeric data type as said other data type.